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ABSTRACT

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) promotes access to learning between universities and other educational institutions throughout the British Commonwealth through distance education and the application of communication technologies. Functions and objectives of COL in distance education are: creation and development of programs in member countries; channelling resources to projects; consultancy services; staff training; facilitating inter-institutional communication links; evaluation and research; acquisition and delivery of teaching materials; adaptation and development of academic materials; local support to students; and recognition of academic credit. Highlights of this annual report for 1990 focus on: (1) training in distance education techniques; (2) materials acquisitions and development; (3) technologies and telecommunications; (4) information and consultancy services; (5) continuing professional education; (6) women in development; and (7) environment. An auditor's report and a listing of members of the Board of Governors and staff are appended. (ALF)

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THE COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

ANNUAL REPORT 1990

A year of Consolidation

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Mission Statement

The purpose of The Commonwealth of Learning is to create and widen access to opportunities for learning, by promoting cooperation between universities, colleges and other educational institutions throughout the Commonwealth, making use of the potential offered by distance education and by the application of communication technologies to education.

Chairman's Message

By any standard, The Commonwealth of Learning has made remarkable strides since its inception. This is acknowledged not only by Ministers of Education and Heads of Government but also by the many who have come to know of the organisation's initiatives. I commend all those who have been associated with COL's evolution and its programmes. It is as a result of their goodwill and cooperation that these advances have been made possible.

For me personally and for the Board, it has been a gratifying period. We are confident that we shall be able to build on the firm foundations laid and, in the process, significantly advance the development of the peoples and countries of the Commonwealth.

Lord Briggs of Lewes

Message From The President

Last year, the work of the Commonwealth of Learning was essentially one of contact and exploration, consulting with institutions, agencies and Governments to explore ways in which our mandate might best be pursued. We have chosen 'A Year of Consolidation' as the theme of this report, signifying at one and the same time the transition from exploration to action on the one hand, and the establishment of a firm foundation for future development on the other. As the report shows we have translated identified priorities into specific programmes, projects and activities in the areas of training in distance education techniques, information and consultancy services, materials acquisition and development, technologies and telecommunications, and continuing professional education. We have highlighted the importance we attach to Teacher Education, Women in Development, and the Environment by singling out for special mention the projects we have embarked upon in these sectors, and we report on the novel and interesting extension of the Study Fellowships Programme. Our achievements in the period covered by the report owe much to the encouragement and support we have received from all quarters, and to the dedication and commitment to the staff to whom the tribute from the Eleventh Conference of Education Ministers, as contained in the excerpt included in the report, properly belongs. Year one was an encouraging one. Year two, covered by this report, is indeed gratifying.

Dr. James A Maraj

A Year of Consolidation

Overview

During the first year of COL's existence, efforts were concentrated on exploration and contact, the formulation of policies and the determination of priorities. In the second year the focus has been on translation of the priorities identified into specific programmes, projects and activities.

This second Annual Report highlights the main areas of activities to which COL has given its initial attention, based on the priorities defined by the Board of Governors, the guidelines contained in the Memorandum of Understanding, and on the consultations held with the various governments, agencies, institutions and individuals across the Commonwealth.

FUNCTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The functions and objectives of The Commonwealth of Learning include:

a) assisting the creation and development of institutional capacity in distance education in member countries;

b) facilitating the channelling of resources to projects and programmes in distance education;

c) providing information and consultancy services on any aspect of distance education including the selection of appropriate technology;

d) undertaking and supporting staff training in the techniques and management of distance education;

e) facilitating inter-institutional communication links;

f) understanding and supporting evaluation and applied research in distance education;

g) assisting the acquisition and delivery of teaching materials and more generally facilitating access to them;

h) commissioning and promoting the adaptation and development of academic credit;

i) establishing and maintaining procedures for the recognition of academic credit;

j) assisting in the development of local support services to students;

k) stimulating and supporting any other activities that fall within the Agency's areas of interest by such means as may be approved by the Board of Governors.

In pursuing the above objectives, COL has initiated action in the following areas:

a) Training in Distance Education Techniques

b) Materials Acquisition and Development

c) Technologies and Telecommunications

d) Information and Consultancy Services

e) Continuing Professional Education

f) Women in Development

g) Environment.

Training in Distance Education Techniques

1990 saw the start of COL's activities to support training in the techniques and management of distance education. In April 1990, COL convened a Roundtable at its Vancouver headquarters on the training of distance educators. As a result of this meeting an action plan on training was developed. The report of the meeting, *Perspectives on Distance Education*, which includes seven papers on training issues, was published later in the year.

In June 1990, a Senior Programme Officer was appointed with responsibility for training, and implementation of the training programme began. Activities to date fall into three broad categories: training trainers and key resource persons in each region of the

Commonwealth as a step towards self reliance in training in each country; training staff of national institutions, in association with COL projects; and support for training initiatives by way of provision of training resources.

During the second half of 1990 COL sponsored one workshop in each of four regions to train key resource people. Each workshop was run in collaboration with a local association or institution: workshops in course development took place in Swaziland, in collaboration with the Distance Learning Association of Southern Africa; in Vanuatu for the Pacific region, in collaboration with The University of the South Pacific; in India for South Asia, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Open University; and a Caribbean workshop on materials adaptation was held in Barbados in collaboration with the University of the West Indies.

To support national policies, COL sent a consultant to The University of the South Pacific to help the staff of the course development unit improve their skills, and two consultants led a course writing workshop in Guyana.

In collaboration with the Open Learning Agency of British Columbia, development of a multimedia training package on the use of technology in distance education was undertaken. This represents the first step towards ensuring that a wide range of materials is available to support training initiatives.

Materials Acquisition and Development

COL has received a report of its commissioned study entitled "*A critique of the UNESCO Environmental Education Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Training modules*". The study is the first phase in the production of a generic distance learning course on environmental education for in-service teacher training at primary level.

The first phase of a COL sponsored project to produce materials for a post-graduate level programme in management and leadership by distance has been concluded. Phase Two will be implemented in 1991, and will involve the University of Nairobi, University of Victoria, Massey University and IGNOU.

COL is also cooperating with UNESCO in the production of distance learning materials in engineering sciences at undergraduate and post-graduate level. Materials are being produced in Applied Mechanics, Strength of Materials and Electrical Principles at undergraduate level, and in Environmental Engineering at post-graduate level.

Marine Resource Management

As a followup to the Malta Symposium in 1989, COL and the International Centre for Ocean Development (ICOD) co-sponsored a meeting in Vancouver in September to identify practical projects for implementation between Canadian institutions and those from the Caribbean, South Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. COL is in the process of following up some of the projects identified at the meeting.

Technical/Vocational Education & Training

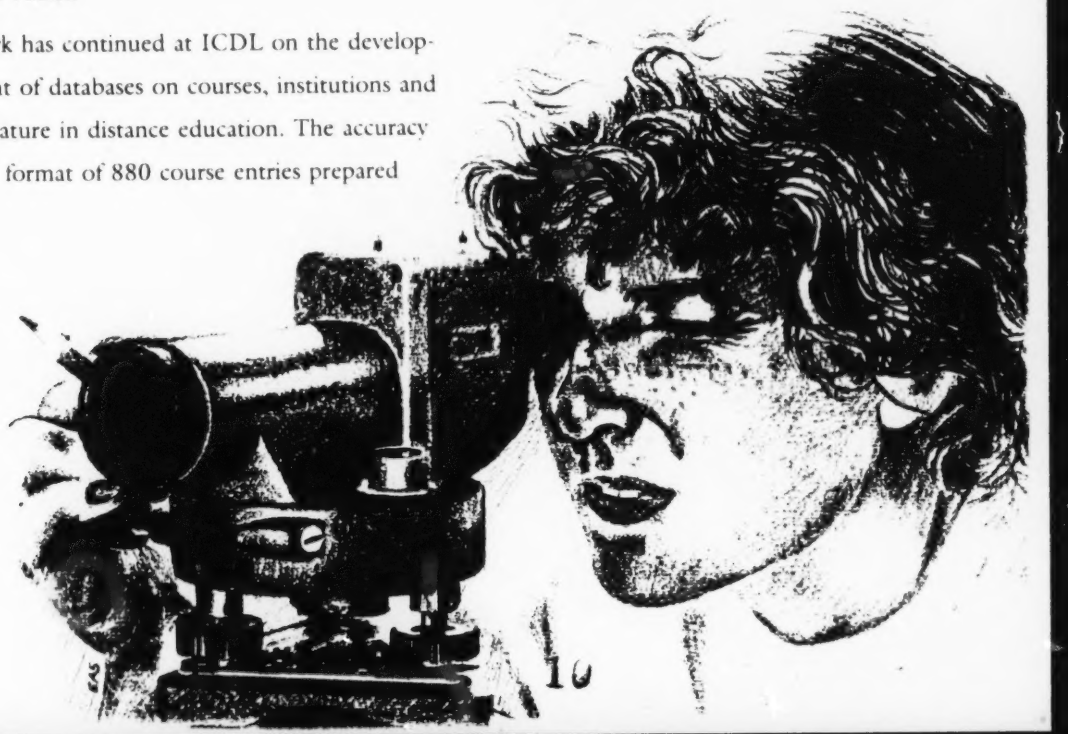
In November 1990, COL convened a highly successful conference in Hong Kong on technical/vocational education and training by distance. The conference, which had as a major objective an examination of how countries might be assisted in gaining access to appropriate programmes and courses of study, learning materials, and expertise to support identified areas of need in technical/vocational, brought together representatives from 25 countries, 22 institutions, and 9 ministries, and included some of the leading distance education specialists in the field. Among the several significant outcomes of the conference was agreement by the main providers of technical/vocational distance learning materials to make these available to Commonwealth developing countries at affordable cost.

Information and Consultancy Services

Work has continued at ICDL on the development of databases on courses, institutions and literature in distance education. The accuracy and format of 880 course entries prepared during the pilot phase have been checked and 200 institutional entries (100 Commonwealth) have been updated. A pilot demonstration of the database was mounted at the 11th CCEM in Barbados.

Supplementing the work at ICDL, COL has responded to queries for specific information on courses, and has provided sample materials for inspection in a variety of subject areas to several institutions in different parts of the Commonwealth.

During 1990 consultant missions were undertaken in Zambia (Mr. Ormond Tate, Principal of The Correspondence School in New Zealand), in Malawi (Dr. Tom Prebble, Director of Extra Mural Studies, Massey University), in Uganda, Makerere University (Professor John Chick, Director DEC, University of New England), in Brunei (Dr. Glen Farrell, President of OLA), in India (Professor John Chick) and in Guyana (Ms. Jennifer O'Rourke, University of Waterloo).



Technologies and Telecommunications

A major focus of COL in all the regions in 1990 was an examination of the ways in which communications infrastructures might be improved to facilitate teaching and learning systems. In the Pacific Region, consideration was given to alternatives which might be applied to upgrade the communication systems of the regional University of the South Pacific.

At the national level, the development of post-school education in countries made up of scattered island groups also require that developments in telecommunications be applied to education and training. Exploratory studies covering several Pacific countries have resulted in the start of a major project in the Solomons Islands. During 1990, planning took place to develop a teaching system which would enable Solomons Islands College of Higher Education (and the regional university) to deliver educational services to outer island provinces of this country, and, in due course, to others.

Considerable time and effort were devoted throughout 1990 to assist a Ministerial Committee in Brunei Darussalam to determine that country's future uses of distance education technologies. While distances within Brunei are not great, there was a national concern to examine how appropriate networks could be developed to bring to the country a variety of courses originating from overseas institutions, as an alternative to sending large number of students abroad. The issues posed by the Brunei investigations are central to COL's mandate, and by the end of 1990 agreement had been reached to establish a Centre for Continuing and Professional Education in Bandar Seri Begawan to work with the local university, the technical institute, and other parts of the educational system.

In the African Region, COL commissioned a study on the status of TV/Radio network and rural telecommunications infrastructure covering twelve Commonwealth countries in the Southern, East and West African regions. These were Botswana, The Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Country profiles were developed for each of these countries, including the status of their radio, television and telecommunications infrastructures. The study was published under the title *"Opportunities for Distance Education in the Commonwealth African Countries"*.

Additionally COL has reached agreement with the Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA), to make use of the latter's Low Power Satellite System (PACSAT) to strengthen communication links between the four West African Commonwealth countries.

In the Caribbean Region, COL's major contribution has been to supply and install communications equipment to establish inter-institutional links within the distance education infrastructure. Following consultations with the Government of Guyana, COL has provided the University of Guyana with a communication/word processing/desktop publishing centre for the development of learning materials, as well as with audio-tape reproduction equipment. In the next phase of the project, COL will be establishing a teleconferencing network between the headquarters of the University's Institute of Adult and Continuing Education in Georgetown and regional study centres in three other major towns.

In the Asian Region, COL has supplied IGNOU with fourteen facsimile machines to enhance the efficiency of student support services and to provide a means for rapid communication between IGNOU, the other open universities and regional study centres.

Continuing Professional Education

One of the important features of Commonwealth functional cooperation has been support for professional groups. Through 1990, COL activity to reinforce this work through distance education was aimed at making appropriate contact with existing networks, and determining priorities for the development of suitable distance education programmes which could support their operation. *"Professional"* in this context is defined broadly, and covers occupational groups engaged in essential tasks — whatever the level of education, training, or skill.

Five broad areas of focus were identified in 1990. These were:

1) Health Sciences (Medical, Nursing, Allied health services, Medical technology, and Population/demographic studies).
2) Law, Law-related, and Public administration.
3) Management, Accounting, Finance.
4) Resource Management (Surveying, Planning, Land Economy, Engineering).
5) Support Services (Libraries, Archives, Journalism, Parliamentary services).

In 1990, attention was directed to determining the scope and priorities of the Health Sciences area for further project development in subsequent years. By the end of the year, considerations of priorities for continuing education in the field of Law, Law-related, and Public Administration had resulted in the determination of four major projects for implementation in 1991.

Teacher Education

Distance education has proved effective in training underqualified and unqualified teachers, thus improving the quantity and quality of teachers. Aware of this, several countries have sought COL's assistance for teacher education.

Agreement was reached in 1990 with the Ministry of Education, Jamaica, on the nature and scope of COL's assistance in training some 800 primary teachers by distance, in the first instance. The project will commence in 1991.

In West Africa, COL sponsored a visit by six officials from Sierra Leone and The Gambia to the National Teachers' Institute in Nigeria to study the operations of distance education programmes for unqualified and underqualified teachers.

Discussions are in train to introduce a Bachelor of Education degree programme by distance at Makerere University making use of course materials from the University of Nairobi.

COL is collaborating with the Commonwealth Secretariat in the production of a collection of case studies demonstrating the use of distance education in teacher training and upgrading programmes.

Research and Evaluation

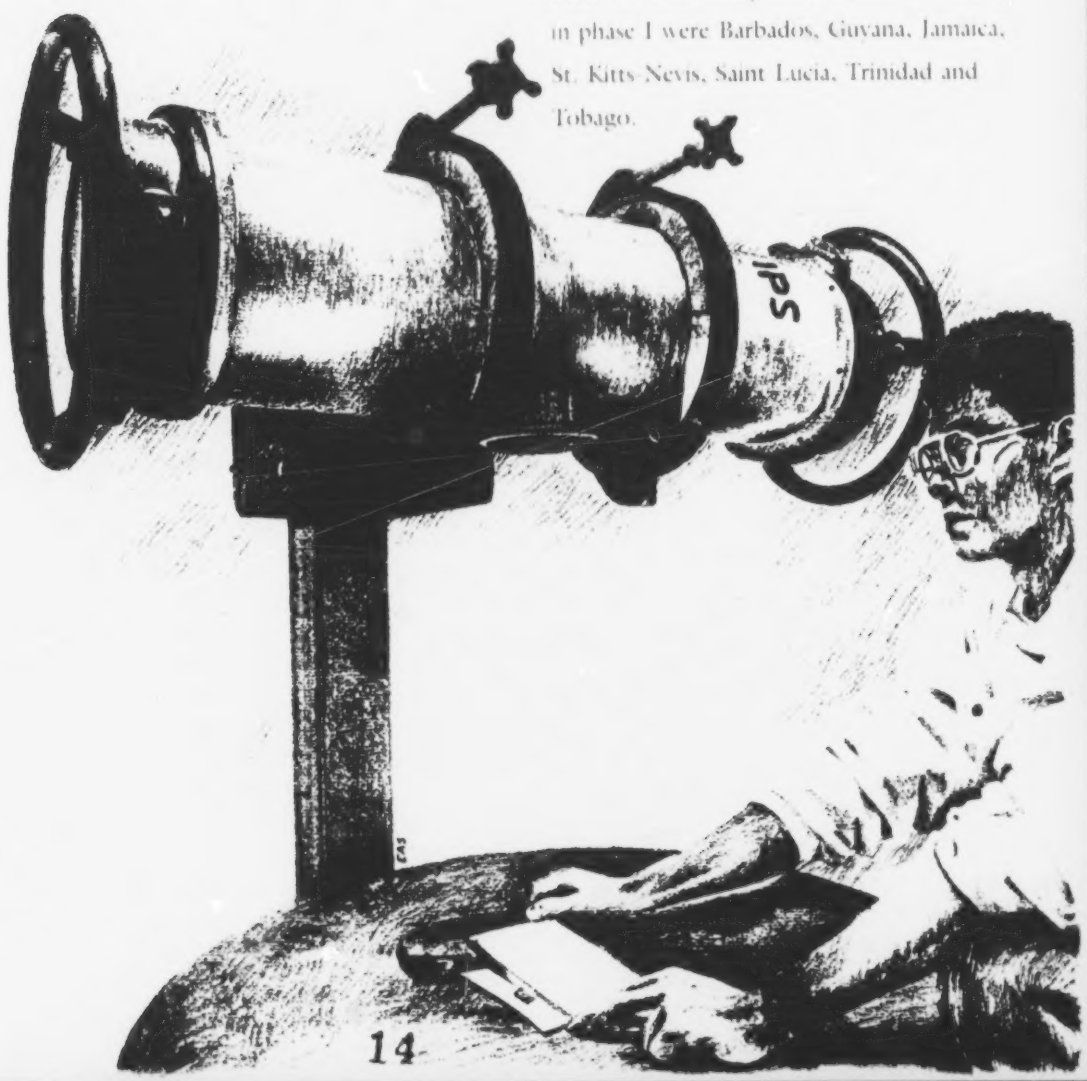
During 1990 a central activity in the Pacific region was a comprehensive review of the distance education programme of The University of the South Pacific. USP had completed twenty years of distance teaching and an Appraisal team led by Mr. W.L. Renwick interacted with university staff in all countries of

the southwest Pacific to evaluate the experience of distance education in a regional setting, and recommend new strategies for serving the region with improved distance education. By the end of the year a draft report had been presented to the University community, for intensive discussion scheduled for early 1991. The Review methodology developed will be applied to other areas of the Commonwealth, starting with the University of the West Indies in 1991.

A parallel project, also commissioned by COL, concerned an analysis of student perceptions about distance education courses offered by USP. The research was undertaken by staff of the University's Extension Services Division according to guidelines set out by COL.

Another COL sponsored research project was completed in 1990. It was carried out jointly by the University of Leeds and IGNOU, with assistance from ODA/UK and the British Council, and focused on difficulties being experienced by distance education students with English language skills.

The first phase of a study of the use of radio as an education medium in the Caribbean has been completed. Countries included in phase I were Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts-Nevis, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago.



Women in Development

As part of the process of defining policy directions, COL organised a conference in New Delhi in May 1990 mainly of Women Vice Chancellors. Fifteen women Vice Chancellors, five men Vice Chancellors of open universities and another fifteen scholars, representing educational experts from eight countries of the Commonwealth took part in the conference. The conference affirmed the important role of distance education in extending access to education to more women, and recommended that COL should play a central role in the dissemination of information on women's studies and legislation concerning women's status, as well as addressing training related to economic development as a priority for women.

These recommendations provided a framework for the development of COL's action plan on women in development. Subsequently, a directory of successful projects involving distance education and women has been commissioned. Some material has also been developed on progressive legislation aimed at gender equity as an input into courses on women's studies.

In collaboration with the Association of Indian Universities, COL has produced a *Handbook on Women's Studies in Indian Universities*. In October 1990, COL reported on its progress to the meeting in Ottawa of Commonwealth Ministers concerned with Women's Affairs.

Environment

COL has responded to the need for materials on the environment by commissioning and directing the production of a video titled *Sustainable Development* in collaboration with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). The video focuses on environmental issues and potential solutions emphasising strategies for sustainable development. It is intended to highlight how individuals and nations can assist in the process of environmental protection and draws on examples of innovative practices found in the Commonwealth.

Executive Heads Meeting

In June 1990 COL convened, in Vancouver, a meeting of executive heads of major distance education institutions. The meeting reviewed COL's progress and working groups discussed COL's key functions and sectors of interest. The meeting was of critical importance in helping to clarify policy and define directions for action. Many recommendations of that meeting have been incorporated in COL's Strategic Plan.

Submission to High Level Appraisal Group

In July 1990, COL made a submission to the High Level Appraisal Group on the Commonwealth in the 1990s. In the preparation of its submission, COL was assisted by an expert consultative group drawn from across the Commonwealth, and from the academic, political and technical assistance spheres. The group met in Vancouver under COL auspices from July 2-4 and the submission was then prepared by COL. The submission underlines the distinctive role of COL and points to the need for more substantial and assured resources.

Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers

COL presented its first report at the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Barbados in 1990. The Ministers received and endorsed the report and welcomed the extensive range of activities which had been launched in such areas as staff training, the exchange of educational materials, telecommunications, institutional development and information services. They noted with satisfaction the particular emphasis COL had placed on continuing professional education, teacher training, the environment and women in development.

COL Fellowship Programme

The Commonwealth of Learning, in cooperation with the Government of British Columbia, has for the last two years run a very successful Fellowship Programme. Under this Programme, ten educators from developing countries were brought each year to British Columbia to study the educational institutions involved in distance education and to discuss with professional colleagues methods and techniques they could use upon return to their home countries.

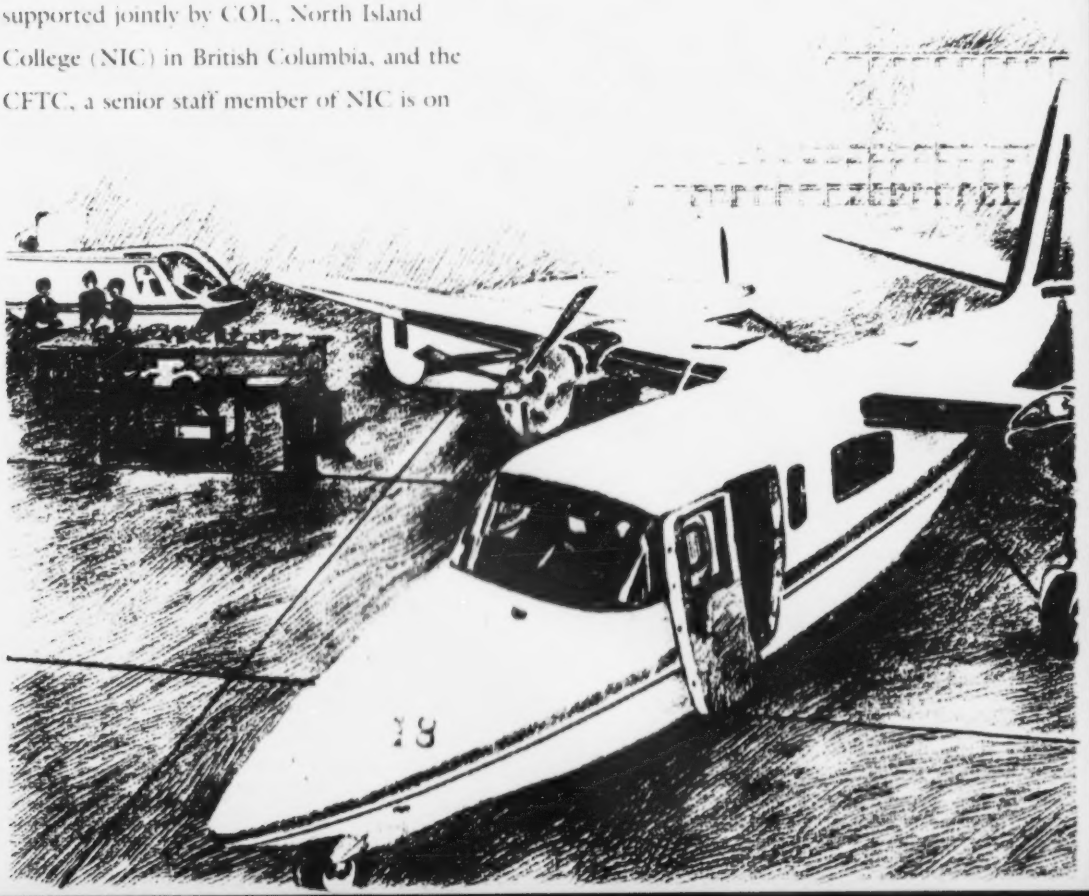
The ten educators awarded COL Fellowships to visit British Columbia in September 1990 were Mr. E. Chowdhury, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education, Bangladesh; Mr. M. Owen, Chief Audio Visual Aid Officer, Ministry of Education and Culture, Barbados; Mr. T. Magetse, Ministry of Education, Botswana; Dr. Y. Bojang, The Gambia College, The Gambia; Mr. K. Narayanan, Registrar, Indira Gandhi National Open University, India; Mrs. T. Chilambe, Senior Education Officer, Ministry of Education and Culture, Malawi; Dr. M. Akintayo, University of Ibadan, Nigeria; Professor J. Syed, Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities, Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan; Mr. J. Kwesiga, Makerere University, Uganda and Dr. A. Kakanda, Head of Education Broadcasting Services, Ministry of General Education, Youth and Sports, Zambia.

In 1990, the Government of British Columbia expanded its support of the Programme in order to increase the opportunities for British Columbia personnel to gain experience in international education and as a means to establish or strengthen linkages between educational institutions in developing countries and British Columbia. Under the new scheme, eight Fellowships were awarded on the basis of professional matches between potential Fellows and the needs identified by the hosting institutions. These Fellows are to visit developing countries throughout the Commonwealth to provide advice and guidance in educational areas, with particular emphasis on distance education.

The B.C. educators to whom the awards were made are Mr. James Bizzocchi, Capilano College to travel to Pakistan and Sri Lanka; Mr. Keith Dunbar, Manager of the Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development, Camosun College, to the regional University of the South Pacific; Mr. Norbert Hartig, Northwest Community College to Zimbabwe; Dr. Allan Markin, Centre Director at the Penticton Campus of Okanagan College to Kenya; Mr. Robert Pollard, British Columbia Institute of Technology to The Gambia; Mr. Tom Roulstone, Northern Lights College to Tonga; Ms. Alice Wong, Vancouver Community College to Swaziland; and Dr. Collin Yerbury, Director of the Centre for Distance Education, Simon Fraser University to the regional University of the West Indies.

Through a special fellowship arrangement supported jointly by COL, North Island College (NIC) in British Columbia, and the CFTC, a senior staff member of NIC is on attachment to Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in Saint Lucia for an academic year to help to establish a distance education unit at the College.

COL is currently carrying out discussions with representatives of the Government of Ontario regarding the implementation of a Fellowship Programme in that Province. It is further hoped that other Canadian provinces, in addition to other countries in the Commonwealth, will decide to sponsor COL Fellows in the future. The feedback received so far indicates the Programme is a positive step towards increasing the awareness of educational challenges facing less-developed countries today, as well as a successful method of establishing linkages between institutions in developed and developing countries.



Excerpts from the Eleventh Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers

Ministers congratulated the new organisation on the commendable progress made since becoming operational in January 1989. They welcomed the extensive range of activities which had been launched in such areas as staff training, the exchange of educational materials, telecommunications, institutional development and information services. They noted with satisfaction the particular emphasis The Commonwealth of Learning had placed on professional education, teacher training, the environment and women in development.

Recalling that a major factor in the decision to establish COL was the existence of a wealth of high-quality distance teaching materials within the Commonwealth, the shared use of which would contribute significantly to the process of human resource development, they strongly supported measures to encourage and facilitate the flow of materials between Commonwealth countries, including arrangements to make materials available at marginal cost where this proved possible.

The establishment of The Commonwealth of Learning had been made possible by the foresight and commitment of governments in pledging funds for the initial five-year period. Ministers welcomed the pledges that had already been made and the funds already remitted and urged countries which had not so far pledged or contributed funds to do so soon.

Excerpt from the Third Commonwealth Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs

Ministers expressed satisfaction at the measures being planned by The Commonwealth of Learning to improve the status of women by widening their access to education. They emphasised the importance of integrating women's concerns and gender equality into all of the activities of The Commonwealth of Learning and urged that Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs should be consulted by The Commonwealth of Learning in the development of these programmes. They requested The Commonwealth of Learning to report to future triennial meetings of Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs. They requested the Secretary-General to bring these views to the attention of Commonwealth Ministers of Education.

Financial Statements

June 30, 1990

Auditors' Report

To the Board of Governors of
The Commonwealth of Learning

We have examined the balance sheet of The Commonwealth of Learning as at June 30, 1990 and the statements of revenues and expenditures and accumulated revenues in excess of expenditures and changes in financial position for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests and other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Agency as at June 30, 1990 and the results of its operations and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding period.

PRICE WATERHOUSE
Chartered Accountants

Vancouver, Canada
August 22, 1990

Balance Sheet

	June 30 1990	June 30 1989
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and term deposits (Note 3)	$10,673,669	$7,778,316
Accounts receivable	79,283	37,022
Prepaid expenses and deposits	55,285	12,986
	10,808,237	7,828,324
Deferred project expense	—	26,500
Fixed assets (Note 4)	235,410	102,307
Special projects (Note 5)	108,785	51,200
	$11,152,432	$8,008,331
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	$ 122,990	$ 126,335
Accrued term gratuities	79,595	10,320
	202,585	136,655
Special projects (Note 5)	108,785	51,200
	311,370	187,855
Accumulated Revenues in Excess of Expenditures		
Accumulated revenues in excess of expenditures	10,841,062	7,820,476
	$11,152,432	$8,008,331

Commitment (Note 9)

Approved by the Board Governor Governor

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures and Accumulated Revenues in Excess of Expenditures

	Year ended June 30 1990	Ten-month period ended June 30 1989
Revenues		
Funding from member governments (Note 6 and Schedule)	$ 4,423,218	$ 9,219,985
Interest income	1,427,920	1,075,462
	5,851,138	10,295,447
Foreign exchange translation adjustments (Note 7)	558,215	(1,385,334)
	6,409,353	8,910,113
Expenditures		
Consultants and contract services	296,686	122,664
Demonstration project (COLIS)	192,688	—
Hospitality and public relations	189,046	4,838
Insurance	11,034	6,790
Library	20,686	—
Office, equipment leases, and supplies	63,256	40,208
Printing and publications	43,266	7,230
Professional fees	43,355	28,182
Programme seed funding	111,420	4,998
Recruitment and staff development	51,657	11,814
Rent	568,971	361,888
Salaries, benefits and allowances	1,017,995	145,431
Study Fellowship Programme, net	10,154	—
Telephone, telex, freight and other services	82,722	24,780
Travel	685,831	201,062
	3,388,767	959,885
Expenditures made by the Commonwealth Secretariat on behalf of the Commonwealth of Learning	—	129,752
	3,388,767	1,089,637
Revenues in excess of expenditures	3,020,586	7,820,476
Accumulated revenues in excess of expenditures, beginning of year	7,820,476	—
Accumulated revenues in excess of expenditures, end of year	$10,841,062	$ 7,820,476

Statement of Changes in Financial Position

	Year ended June 30 1990	Ten-month period ended June 30 1989
Cash provided by (used in) operating activities		
Revenues in excess of expenditures	$ 3,020,586	$7,820,476
Changes in non-cash working capital		
Accounts receivable	(42,261)	(37,022)
Prepaid expenses and deposits	(42,299)	(12,986)
Accounts payable	(3,345)	126,335
Accrued term gratuities	69,275	10,320
	(18,630)	86,647
	3,001,956	7,907,123
Cash provided by (used in) investing activities		
Purchase of fixed assets	(133,103)	(102,307)
Deferred project expense	26,500	(26,500)
	(106,603)	(128,807)
Increase in cash and term deposits	2,895,353	7,778,316
Cash and term deposits, beginning of year	7,778,316	—
Cash and term deposits, end of year	$10,673,669	$7,778,316

Notes to Financial Statements – June 30, 1990

1. Formation of the Agency

The Commonwealth of Learning (the "Agency") is an International Agency established under a Memorandum of Understanding on The Commonwealth of Learning as agreed by Commonwealth Governments on September 1, 1988.

An agreement between The Commonwealth of Learning and the Government of Canada dated November 14, 1988 established the privileges of the Agency in locating its headquarters in Vancouver. Under the terms of this agreement, the Agency has immunity from every form of legal process, is exempt from all direct taxes, custom duties and import and export restrictions and its non-Canadian employees are exempt from income tax on salaries paid to them by the Agency.

2. Significant accounting policies

Generally accepted accounting principles

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in Canada.

Fixed assets and leasehold improvements

Fixed assets are recorded at cost. No depreciation is charged on fixed assets. Leasehold improvement costs are expensed as incurred.

Revenue recognition

Contributions from member governments are accounted for at the time of receipt in Vancouver, Canada or at the time the Commonwealth Secretariat notifies the Agency that it has deposited funds to the account of the Agency.

In-kind contributions from member governments received in the form of goods and services are recorded as revenue at fair value when fair value can be reasonably estimated.

Translation of foreign currencies

Assets and liabilities held in a foreign currency have been translated to Canadian dollar equivalents at the exchange rate in effect at the balance sheet date. Revenue and expense items have been translated at the prevailing rate of exchange on the transaction date.

3. Cash and term deposits

Cash and term deposits are held as follows:

	1990	1989
London, England		
Cash in interest bearing accounts	$ 195,346	$1,054,078
Term deposits	7,260,418	5,747,400
Vancouver, Canada		
Cash in interest bearing accounts	664,617	680,636
Term deposits	2,553,288	296,202
	$10,673,669	$7,778,316

4. Fixed assets

The following is a summary of fixed assets:

	1990	1989
Furniture and fixtures, at cost	$ 73,321	$ 59,360
Computer equipment and software, at cost	128,432	42,947
Audio visual and communication equipment, at cost	33,657	—
	$235,410	$102,307

5. Special projects

Study fellowship programme

The Agency, in cooperation with the Province of British Columbia, Canada has introduced a Study Fellowships Programme whereby ten Fellows from ten different Commonwealth countries will be able to enhance their professional development through structured programmes featuring visitations to institutes, university and colleges and consultations and presentations at the Agency headquarters. In 1990, the Province of British Columbia doubled its grant to $100,000 to extend the programme to permit British Columbia personnel to spend a similar period in other Commonwealth countries. The Agency has made a commitment to provide up to $20,000 of funding for the programme if the costs of the programme exceed the amount of the Province of British Columbia grant. Funds available to undertake the programme are as follows:

	1990	1989
Province of British Columbia grant, term deposit	$100,000	$50,000
Interest on term deposit	5,000	1,200
	105,000	51,200

Research activities

The Agency is raising funds for the Study of Language Needs in Distance Learning. Funds to undertake the programme are as follows:

The British Council, cash	3,785	—
	$108,785	$51,200

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6. Funding from member governments

On March 23, 1990 the Agency entered into an agreement with the Department of Communication of Canada whereby the Department of Communication of Canada will contribute $2,000,000 towards certain communication and technology expenditures over a two year period. During the year the Agency received $750,000 of which $436,000 was expended.

Australia has agreed to contribute A$2,000,000 over five years to be directed to the Agency's programmes in the South Pacific and Southern African regions, and to the Agency's general expenditures.

The United Kingdom has agreed to contribute up to £2,000,000 over a five year period from April 1, 1989 to March 31, 1994, under bilateral arrangements with the British Open University, to develop an information database at the International Centre for Distance Learning (ICDL) and to build in academic transfer information. The value of this service has not been determined at this time and therefore in accordance with the Revenue recognition policy in Note 2, no revenue has been recorded in these financial statements for the year ended June 30, 1990.

The information database is in addition to other assistance which will be given from time to time under bilateral country programmes and research programmes on agreed projects.

7. Foreign exchange translation adjustments

The foreign exchange translation adjustments result primarily from changes in the exchange rates used to translate Pounds Sterling at the dates of receipt and at June 30, 1990 to Canadian dollars.

8. Salaries, benefits and allowances

The Agency's Headquarters Agreement with the Government of Canada stipulates that employees of the Agency who are Canadian citizens residing in or ordinarily resident in Canada shall be exempt from federal income taxation deductions on the salaries and emoluments paid to them by the Agency. The Agency has set up an internal levy corresponding to the income taxes that would otherwise be withheld from the above-noted employees' remuneration. The proceeds from the levy can be used to defray the expenses of the Agency and do not have to be remitted to the Canadian government as income tax withholdings. A similar agreement was reached with the Province of British Columbia for exemption from provincial income taxation for 1990 and is being finalised for future years. An amount of $46,133 (1989 — $4,905) arising from the internal levy has been offset against salary expense in the current year.

9. Commitment

Future minimum lease payments under an operating lease for office space are as follows:

1991	$556,000
1992	556,000
1993	417,000
	$1,529,000

Funding from Member Governments

Schedule

	1990	1989	Cumulative funding received
Australia	$ 53,936	$ —	$ 53,936
Bahamas	15,559	—	15,559
Bangladesh	11,030	—	11,030
Barbados	9,078	—	9,078
Botswana	18,155	—	18,155
Brunei	—	6,813,900	6,813,900
Canada			
Canadian International Development Agency	700,000	325,000	1,025,000
Department of Communication	750,000	—	750,000
Province of British Columbia	1,267,500	1,250,000	2,517,500
Cyprus	2,337	6,641	8,978
Guyana	12,599	—	12,599
India	940,975	128,300	1,069,275
Maldives	9,110	—	9,110
Malta	2,017	—	2,017
New Zealand	38,122	79,544	117,666
Nigeria	592,800	616,600	1,209,400
	$4,423,218	$9,219,985	$13,643,203

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